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ABSTRACT

The East School Assistance Center (ESAC) is an organizational unit of Toledo Public Schools that provides psychological and special-education services to the East Toledo region of the district. This paper presents findings of a study that evaluated the quality and efficiency of the center's services. The delivery model features a regional location and shared housing, school-assistance teams, an emphasis on intervention, a steering committee, weekly staff meetings, cross-categorical special-education supervision, evening hours, and school-community agency collaboration. Data were obtained from a survey of regular-education K-8 teachers, all special-education teachers, and school administrators in the East Toledo service region. The return rate was 70 percent for administrators, 39 percent for regular-education teachers, and 47 percent for special-education teachers. The center's records were also analyzed. Survey respondents perceived an improvement over the services previously provided in the area. Improvement occurred across the following dimensions--availability, responsiveness, timeliness, pleasantness/professional behaviors, utility, and satisfaction. However, the data did not indicate that the center's service-delivery model was more or less efficient than the traditional model, in part because the workload of psychologists and output were difficult to measure. If the district chooses to adopt the East Center model throughout the district, it should focus on the selection and training of center personnel for successful implementation. Nine tables are included. (LMI)

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ED 387 873

An Evaluation of the

East School Assistance Center

for

Toledo Public Schools

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January 17, 1993

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Introduction

Purpose of the Evaluation

The mission of the East School Assistance Center (ESAC), as found in the "Special Education Clinic Pilot Guidelines," is to "...enhance the quality and efficiency of Instructional Support Services (i.e. Psychological/Special Education Services)." This evaluation of the center, then, sought to determine if the ESAC has enhanced the quality and efficiency of these services. The quality of a service depends upon how well it meets the needs and expectations of the recipient of the service. Efficiency, on the other hand, involves the relationship of effort to results. This evaluation will seek to (1) ascertain how well the center is meeting the needs and expectations of those who receive its services and (2) compare the resources used and workload of the center to the resources used and workload of the remainder of the district. This evaluation was conducted to identify areas for improvement of the ESAC model and to provide information for use in deciding whether the model should be expanded to other areas of the school district.

Description of the Center

The ESAC is an organizational unit of Toledo Public Schools that provides psychological and special education services to the East Toledo region of the district. The center is located in East Toledo at the corner of Starr and Raymer, in the East Mental Health Center building. ESAC serves the region of Toledo Public Schools east of the Maumee River which includes Waite High School, East Toledo Junior High School, and seven elementary schools: Birmingham, Franklin, East Side Central, Garfield, Navarre, Oakdale, and Raymer. The staff at ESAC is comprised of three school psychologists, one cross-categorical special education supervisor, an intern psychologist, a vision/hearing examiner, and a secretary. Matrix staff at the center select the Center Coordinator.

The center is a departure from the delivery model that has been traditionally used in the district for delivery of psychological and special education services. Within the traditional model, psychologists and special education supervisors are based in locations central to the school district, but in separate locations.

In addition to *regional location and shared housing*, features of the new model that distinguish it from the old model are *School Assistance Teams (SATs), emphasis on intervention, Steering Committee, weekly meetings of center staff, cross-categorical special education*

supervision, evening hours, and *school-community agency collaboration*.

School Assistance Team (SAT). The SAT plays an important role in the center's approach. The SAT is a problem-solving group that has been formed within each of the seven elementary schools. These teams are made up of building-level school personnel (for example, several teachers and the principal) joined by a school psychologist. A student who is observed as having academic or behavioral difficulty may be referred to the SAT by the student's teacher. The teacher's referral is considered and interventions are developed during monthly, day-long, SAT meetings. The team makes decisions (e.g., whether psychological testing of the student is warranted) by consensus.

Emphasis on intervention. Where the traditional model emphasizes testing as a means of determining placement of students and relies upon specialized expertise, the center's model emphasizes intervention and relies upon collaborative problem-solving. Interventions are used to help students succeed in the regular classroom.

Weekly meetings of center staff. Members of the center staff attend weekly meetings chaired by the Coordinator. These meetings are used to exchange information, consult on cases, and to engage in group problem-solving.

Steering Committee. The Steering Committee, or Ad Hoc Team, attends one of the weekly center staff meetings each month. This group is made up of the center staff, the nine building principals in the East Toledo region, the junior and senior high school guidance directors, and the East Toledo pupil personnel supervisor. The building administrators and counselors engage in mutual problem solving and consultation with the center staff.

Cross-categorical special education supervision. Supervision for special education teachers in the East Toledo region is provided by the center through a cross-categorical supervisor. The supervisor assists in academic assessment, observations, development and implementation of interventions, facilitates the placement of special education students, and supervises the teachers of all special education teachers in the region. Teachers of hearing impaired students, tutors of learning disabled students, and vision consultants are not supervised by the ESAC supervisor, however.

Evening hours. The ESAC's location, in a community agency building which is open during the evening, enables the center to remain open during evening hours when requested.

School-community agency collaboration. The location of the center in the community agency building allows two-way referrals between the center and the community agency.

Implementation of the Center

Activities leading to the implementation of the center began in September, 1992. As can be seen in Table 1, the center has only recently become fully operational.

Table 1. East School Assistance Center Development Activities

Date	Activity
Sep 92	3 psychologists and 1 vision/hearing screener appointed
Sep 92	Needs assessment survey completed by building principals
Oct 92	Office space secured
Nov 92	Building School Assistance Teams appointed
Nov-Dec 92	Preliminary SAT inservice provided
Jan 93	Secretary appointed
Jan 93	Shuttle transportation initiated from buildings to East Center initiated
Mar 93	Cross-categorical special education supervisor appointed
Apr-May 93	Equipment delivered
Jun 93	East School Assistance Center pilot evaluated
Sep 93	Computer system operational

Design of the Evaluation

Quality

Evaluation of the quality of a service, such as psychological testing or intervention assistance, depends primarily on the perceptions of the recipients of the service. Accordingly, the quality of the services were assessed from the perspective of the regular education teachers, special education teachers, and administrators who rely upon the center for such services. There are other recipients of the services whose perceptions could have been sought, most notably, the students who are the object of the services and their parents. Unfortunately, methodological obstacles in obtaining data from young children, the higher cost of obtaining data from parents,

and the non-recurring nature of their encounter with the type of services provided by the center precluded their participation in the survey. Although teachers have a set of needs and expectations that are separate from those of students and parents, many of the student and parent concerns can be expected to overlap with the concerns of the teachers. Because they are positioned within the system and have multiple experiences with psychological and special education services, teachers are in an ideal position to judge the quality of the services. In addition to the survey of relative satisfaction with the services provided by the center, complaints from teachers about services are a good indicator of dissatisfaction, and records of such complaints were compared to complaints received in the rest of the district during the same period.

The populations of regular education teachers in kindergarten through eighth grades, all special education teachers, and school administrators (including principals, deans, and counselors) in the East Toledo service region were requested to respond to survey instruments. Regular teachers at the high school were not included because they request psychological and special education services much less frequently than elementary and junior high teachers. High school special education teachers were included because, other than the reduced number of referrals when compared to elementary special education teachers, their need for the services provided by the center is similar.

Efficiency

The serious conceptual and methodological problems that generally attend the estimation of efficiency in the not-for-profit sector of the economy are present in this evaluation. For example, what does the center produce? How should the outputs be valued? What inputs should be included and how should they be valued? What data are available for the evaluation?

Given these difficulties, the study of the efficiency of the center was restricted to a comparison of ratios such as professional personnel to students served. Data concerning the position allocations of special education supervisors and school psychologists assigned to the East Toledo region and the rest of the district were obtained from the Executive Director of Instructional Support Services, the Chief Psychologist, and the Director of the ESAC. In addition to numbers of special education supervisors and psychologists, numbers of special

education students, regular education students, referrals for psychological testing, special education teachers, regular education teachers, vision and hearing examiners, mileage reimbursements for supervisors, expulsion overturn statistics at the pupil personnel centers were obtained from the district and reviewed.

Method

Development of the Survey Questionnaire

Three questionnaires were developed to obtain the perceptions of regular education teachers, special education teachers, and administrators concerning the quality of services provided by the center. Several steps were taken to insure content validity. A review of the service quality improvement literature was conducted (esp. Hayes, 1992), and interviews were held with educators who were experienced with the types of services provided by the center. A single instrument was initially developed. This basic instrument was field tested with a group of experienced regular and special education teachers and reviewed by East Assistance Center staff and the Toledo Federation of Teachers Curriculum Committee. Suggestions for improving the instruments were received from each of the reviewing parties and incorporated into the instrument.

The basic instrument was used as a starting point for developing three instruments for use with the regular education teacher, special education teacher, and administrator populations, respectively. Twenty-five of the items are common to all three instruments. Dimensions

The instruments range from 26 to 31 items in length, and the items are clustered into the six dimensions listed and defined below:

Availability (of support): The degree to which the respondent can contact the provider and receive assistance.

Responsiveness (of support): The degree to which the provider reacts promptly to the respondent's needs.

Timeliness (of support): The degree to which the job is accomplished within the expected or agreed upon time frame.

Pleasantness/Professional Behaviors: The degree to which the provider uses suitable professional behavior and manners.

Utility (of support): The degree to which the respondent finds the support valuable.

Satisfaction: The degree to which the respondent is satisfied with the services.

Scale

Respondents were instructed to compare the quality of services provided by the center during the period it has been in operation with the quality of services provided before the center began operation. Directions were given to the respondents to circle the point on the scale (example of format provided below) that corresponded to their perception. A five-point Likert-type scale with a sixth point, NK (for No Knowledge) was provided for each item. Points on the scale included Very Much Worse (VMW), Worse (W), Same (S), Improved (I), Very Much Improved (VMI), and No Knowledge (NK). The values used for the numeric scale were essentially one (1), two (2), three (3), four (4), and five (5).

	VMW	W	S	I	VMI	
1. I know the procedure to use when seeking assistance.	1	2	3	4	5	NK

Respondents

Regular teachers, special education teachers, and administrators assigned to Waite High School, East Toledo Junior High School, Birmingham, Franklin, East Side Central, Garfield, Navarre, Oakdale, and Raymer Elementary Schools comprised the three populations for the surveys. Bundles of survey packets were assembled for each of the nine buildings and delivered to the district for distribution.

Results, Discussion, and Conclusions

Return Rate

As can be seen in Table 2, the return rate for the surveys was 70% for the administrators,

39% for the regular education teachers, and 47% for the special education teachers.

Table 2. Response Rate

	Number	Respondents	Percentage
Regular Education Teachers (does not include first-year teachers, 7)	122	48	39%
Special Education Teachers (does not include first-year teachers, 2)	61	29	47%
Administrators	23	16	70%

There are several possible explanations for the low rate of return from the regular teachers. Because the ESAC is relatively new, some teachers may have chosen not to respond because of a low level of knowledge concerning the center. Perhaps some teachers did not connect the ESAC with an aspect of the center that they had experienced; ,i.e., the SAT. As one primary teacher wrote in the open-ended comments section of the instrument: "We use the SAT team and treat most of our problems in school. I do not deal with the East Center." The rate may also have been adversely affected by numeric codes that were placed on each of the survey forms by district personnel during the distribution of the survey instruments to the buildings. These codes may have caused some individuals to become concerned that their responses could be identified. This fear may have caused them to not respond. The results, conclusions, and recommendations in this report are, of course, based upon the surveys that were completed and returned.

Mean Scores for All Items

Results. The mean score for all items when scores from the three groups were combined was 4.05. The mean score for All Items for the Administrators Group was 4.19, for the Teachers Group the mean score was 4.03, and for the Special Education Teachers Group the mean score was 3.53 (Table 3).

Discussion. The mean score from the combined groups indicates that the situations

described have improved when compared to previous years, as the overall mean score is greater than the numeric value (4.0) representing Improved on the response scale. Moreover, the mean scores for the Administrators Group and the Teachers Group were greater than 4. The mean score for the Special Education Teachers Group was found, through further analysis, to be significantly lower than the Administrators and Teachers Groups ($p<.05$) , but was still approximately one-half of a unit above Same (3.0) on the response scale. Among the many possible interpretations of the significant difference found between the Special Education Teachers Group and the other two groups is that members of the Special Education Teachers Group have a different relationship to the center and, consequently, have had different experiences with the center.

Perhaps teachers of students with low incidence conditions; i.e.., HI, MH, and SBH, may be somewhat dissatisfied with the support received under the new model. These teachers may have reservations about the technical and program support services provided by a supervisor without specific training or experience in their category. One special education teacher indicated in her comments that the value of the SAT was limited for students with MH conditions.

Conclusion. The perceived quality of psychological and special education services has improved for all three groups since the center began providing these services. Although the special education teachers indicated an improved level of satisfaction across all dimensions, the degree of improvement was not as great as that of the other two groups.

Table 3. Means and Reliability for All Items Score and Dimension Scores

	Teachers		Special Education Teachers		Administrators	
	Mean	Reliability	Mean	Reliability	Mean	Reliability
All Items	4.03	.9730	3.53	.9924	4.19	.9799
Availability	4.06	.9063	3.66	.9394	4.35	.9297
Responsive	3.94	.9211	3.47	.9604	4.16	.9580
Timeliness	4.19	.8731	3.57	.9778	4.04	.8499
Pleas/Prof	4.29	.9295	3.91	.9894	4.30	.9157
Utility	3.88	.9425	3.40	.9659	4.07	.9508

Satisfaction	4.01	.8964	3.57	.9517	4.41	1.0000

Mean Scores for Dimensions

The mean scores of the dimensions for the Teachers Group, in descending order, were Pleasantness/Professional Behavior, 4.29; Timeliness, 4.19; Availability, 4.06; Satisfaction, 4.01; Responsiveness, 3.94; and Utility, 3.88.

The mean scores of the dimensions for the Special Education Teachers Group, in descending order, were Pleasantness/Professional Behavior, 3.91; Availability, 3.66; Timeliness, 3.57; Satisfaction, 3.57; Responsiveness, 3.47; and Utility, 3.40.

The mean scores of the dimensions for the Administrators Group, in the same order, were Satisfaction, 4.41; Availability, 4.35; Pleasantness/Professional Behavior, 4.30; Responsiveness, 4.16; Utility, 4.07; and Timeliness, 4.04.

Discussion. The Teachers Group and the Special Education Teachers Group perceived the Pleasantness/Professional Behavior Dimension as having improved more than the other five dimensions and the Utility Dimension as having improved less than the other dimensions. The high scores for Pleasantness/Professional Behavior dimension indicate that the professional staff of the center use appropriate professional behavior and manners. The relatively low scores on the Utility Dimension by the two teacher groups, and the administrator group, as well, indicate that the respondents do not perceive the value of the support to have improved to the same extent that the other dimensions have improved.

Conclusion. The quality of psychological and special education services has improved across all six of the dimensions (Availability, Responsiveness, Timeliness, Pleasant/Professional Behaviors, Utility, and Satisfaction) since the center began operation.

Reliability Estimates

Results. Reliability estimates for each of the three instruments were high (All Items Reliability scores, Table 3), and the estimates of reliability for each of the six dimensions of the three instruments were also high.

Discussion. These high estimates of reliability indicate little random error in the measurements, allowing greater confidence in analyzing the relations among the variables.

Table 4. Correlation Coefficient of Dimensions with Satisfaction Dimension

Dimension	Teachers	Special Education Teachers	Administrators
Availability	.6633	.8408	.7723
Responsiveness	.6326	.9583	.8132
Timeliness	.5892	.8784	.7646
Pleasantness/Professional Behaviors	.5208	.9164	.8115
Utility	.6941	.8906	.8217

Relationship of Dimensions to Satisfaction Dimension

Results. The results of a correlational analysis are displayed in Table 4. These coefficients were calculated to identify the dimensions most highly associated with the Satisfaction Dimension. In the Teachers Group, the Utility Dimension has the highest correlation, .6941. The other dimensions in the Teachers Group have correlations with the Satisfaction Dimension that are nearly as high. In the Special Education Teachers Group, the Responsiveness Dimension has the highest correlation with the Satisfaction Dimension, .9583. In the Administrators Group, Utility is most highly correlated with the Satisfaction Dimension. The Responsiveness and Pleasantness/Professional Behavior Dimensions have correlations nearly as high; .8132 and .8115, respectively.

Discussion. Dimensions that are highly correlated with the Satisfaction Dimension are considered to be more important in determining satisfaction. Improvement in these dimensions will probably result in improvement of the Satisfaction Dimension. The correlation coefficients for each group are generally clustered near one another.

Conclusion. The five dimensions are of nearly equal importance in determining satisfaction.

Teachers Group

Several of the responses to general information items were found to have significant correlation coefficients with the All Items mean score and the dimensions for the Teachers Group.

Results, Gender Correlations. Gender was correlated with the All Items mean score (.4378, $p<.01$); the Availability Dimension (.3962, $p<.01$); the Responsiveness Dimension (.4044, $p<.01$), the Utility Dimension (.3939, $p<.01$); and the Satisfaction Dimension (.3168, $p<.01$).

Discussion, Gender Correlations. Females responded to items within these dimensions with higher scores than male respondents. There were six male teachers responding to the survey, and three of the male teachers were located at the junior high school.

Conclusion, Gender Correlations. There is a significant difference in the responses of men and women teachers on the All Items mean score and to the Availability, Responsiveness, Utility, and Satisfaction Dimensions, with men perceiving less improvement.

Results, Building Correlations. Building was correlated with the All Items mean score (.3182, $p<.05$) and with the Availability Dimension (.3829, $p<.01$). A one-way ANOVA procedure and a Tukey Multiple Range Test revealed that Junior High respondents provided significantly lower scores on the Satisfaction dimension from respondents at Birmingham, Raymer, East Side Central, Garfield, and Navarre ($p<.0122$).

Discussion, Building Correlations. One of the central elements in the ESAC's approach to providing services is the development of SATs, building-level intervention teams. According to a comment provided by a member of the Administrators Group from East Toledo Junior High, SATs have not worked well at the junior high. The SAT was tried during the 1992-93 school year and failed. During the 1993-94 school year teachers have not participated on the SAT. Two junior high teachers also commented negatively on the SAT.

Conclusion, Building Correlations. Satisfaction of the junior high teachers with the ESAC's services is significantly lower than teachers at other buildings. Intervention assistance teams, such as the SAT, have been less successful in secondary schools in other districts, too. However, there are several such teams in secondary schools in the Greater Toledo area that are reported to be functioning well (e.g., both of the Sylvania high schools and Anthony Wayne

High School). Recommend that a successful secondary school team be contacted and studied.

Results, SAT Member Correlations. SAT Member was correlated with the All Items mean score (.3061, $p<.05$), the Availability Dimension (.3673, $p<.05$), and the Utility Dimension (.3287, $p<.05$).

Discussion, SAT Member Correlations. The higher scores of SAT Members on the may have been due to their greater familiarity with the SAT.

Conclusion, SAT Member Correlations. SAT members perceive that All Items, the Availability Dimension, and the Utility Dimension have improved more than respondents who have not been members of an SAT. Perhaps there is a way to increase teacher awareness of the SAT and other center services by broadening teacher participation on SATs.

Results, Rely Upon Principal; Rely Upon Counselor. Responses from teachers who indicated that they relied upon the principal for assistance with a student who had behavioral or learning problems were significantly lower than other respondents on the Availability Dimension (.3689, $p<.05$). There was also a significant correlation between respondents who relied upon the counselor for assistance and lower scores on the Satisfaction Dimension (.4036, $p<.01$).

Discussion, Rely Upon Principal; Rely Upon Counselor. The availability of services provided by the center may not be recognized as being improved by respondents who seek assistance from the principal. In a like manner, satisfaction with the services provided with the center may not be perceived as improved by respondents who seek assistance from the counselor.

Conclusion, Rely Upon Principal; Rely Upon Counselor. Principals and counselors have traditionally provided support to teachers who have students with behavioral or learning problems and should continue to do so. However, because some teachers rely upon principals and counselors for assistance, the assistance provided by them may sometimes take the form of increasing awareness of the center and how the center's services may be used by teachers.

Special Education Teacher Group

Results, Rely Upon Psychologist. Respondents who included the Psychologist as a source of assistance with a student who had behavioral or learning problems were significantly different than other respondents on the All Items mean (.4273, $p<.05$) and three dimensions: Responsiveness (.4046, $p<.05$), Timeliness (.4261, $p<.05$), and Utility (.4425, $p<.05$). These

respondents perceived greater improvement than other respondents.

Discussion, Rely Upon Psychologist. Respondents who rely upon the Psychologist for assistance are probably more familiar with the services provided by the center. Conclusion, Rely Upon Psychologist. Respondents who rely upon the Psychologist are more likely to report that services have improved than respondents who have not relied upon the psychologists for support.

Administrator Group

There were no correlations between General Information Items and Dimensions for the Administrators Group.

Comments. Respondents from the Administrator Group were requested to respond to three statements. The questions and a summary of the responses are provided below.

1. Pupil Personnel Services should be available through the center. There were ten responses, and all but one opposed the statement. The primary reason for the opposition was the different function of the two centers.

2. Pupil Personnel activities should be closely coordinated with the activities of the center. There were five responses to this statement, and all five opposed the statement.

3. Counseling services for elementary students should be provided through the center. There were ten responses to this statement, with eight favoring and two opposing. The opposing comments came from two secondary school counselors who objected that the counselor needs immediate access to records and to interact and share resources with teachers in the building. There were three reasons provided in support of the statement: (1) more counselors would be better, (2) counselors are needed on the SATs, and (3) supervision for counselors would be improved.

Efficiency

Comparisons

Several comparisons were made between the personnel (psychologists and special education supervisor) and workload (as represented by buildings, teachers, and students) in the area served by the ESAC and the rest of the district (West).

Percentages. A comparison of the student workload and the numbers of psychologists

and special education supervisors assigned to the ESAC and the rest of the district was made. Information on numbers of regular education students, special education students, regular education teachers, special education teachers, psychologists, special education supervisors, vision/hearing technicians, and secretaries were reviewed for the area served by the ESAC and the West.

Percentages were calculated to facilitate the comparison (Table 5). The area served by the ESAC contains slightly over 9% of the regular education students, but nearly 19% of the special education students in the district. The ESAC supports nearly 20% of the special education teachers in the district and nearly 15% of the regular education teachers. The three ESAC psychologists comprise 16.7% of the psychologists in the district, and the ESAC special education supervisor comprises 16.7% of the special education supervisors in the district.

Table 5. Numbers of Students and Professional Personnel in the District

	ESAC	West	ESAC as Percentage of Total
Special Education Students	817	3,550	18.71%
Regular Education Students	3,211	31,443	9.27%
Special Education Teachers	72	296	19.57%
Regular Education Teachers	286.5	1,626.8	14.97%
Psychologists	3	13	16.67%

Special Education Supervisors	1	5	16.67%
Vision/Hearing Technicians	1	4	20.00%
Secretaries	1	4	20.00%

Psychologist-Student Ratios. The workload for the ESAC psychologists was compared to the workload of the West psychologists using ratios of students (Table 6). The staffing ratios for East and West psychologists are similar for special education students, but the East psychologist ratio for regular education students is less than half of the West ratio. According to estimates provided by the district, about 40% of the workload for psychologists comes from special education students and about 60% comes from regular education students. Using these estimates one percent of an East psychologist's workload is approximately seven (7) special education students (273/40) or approximately 40 (2,419/60) regular education students.

When these percentages of workload are applied to the East psychologists' ratios, the special education students generate approximately 40% of the workload and the regular education students generate 27% of the workload. When student ratios alone are considered, the workload of East psychologists is about two-thirds of the district average. Also, ESAC psychologists are assigned to three buildings, but in the remainder of the district, psychologists typically are assigned to four buildings.

Table 6. Workload for TPS Psychologists Based on Student Ratios

	Students	Psychologists	Ratio	Percentage of Workload	Number of Students Comprising 1% of Workload
	West				
Special Education	3,550	13	273:1	40%	6.8

Regular Education	31,443	13	2,419:1	60%	40.3
	East				
Special Education	817	3	272:1	40%	6.8
Regular Education	3,211	3	1,070:1	27%	17.8

Another method of comparing the workload for the ESAC psychologists analyzes the ratio of psychologists to teachers (Table 7). The staffing ratios for East and West psychologists are similar for special education teachers, and the East psychologist ratio for regular education teachers is approximately 80% of the West ratio. Using the same division of workload between regular and special education (40% and 60%) employed previously, one percent of the West psychologist's workload is approximately .569 special education teachers (296/40) or approximately 2.09 (1,626.8/60) regular education teachers.

When these percentages of workload are applied to the East psychologists' ratios, the special education teachers generate approximately 40% of the workload and the regular education teachers generate 46% of the workload. When teacher ratios alone are considered, the workload of East psychologists is about 86% of the West psychologists.

Table 7. Workload for TPS Psychologists Based on Teacher Ratios

	Teachers	Psychologists	Ratio	Percentage of Workload	Number of Teachers Comprising 1% of Workload
	West				
Special Education	296	13	23:1	40%	.569
Regular Education	1,626.8	13	125:1	60%	2.09

	East				
Special Education	72	3	24:1	40%	.6
Regular Education	286.5	3	96:1	46%	1.6

Other Indicators of Workload

The ESAC psychologists had a higher average number of cases per building (Table 8). Moreover, the workload of the ESAC psychologists includes additional duties that are related to the unique aspects of the center's mission; i.e., support of the SATs, interventions, meetings of the Steering Committee, weekly meetings of center staff, school-community agency collaboration, and administration of the center. The higher percentages of consultations, interventions, SAT inservices, and SAT referrals for intervention reported by the ESAC psychologists (Table 8) are congruent with the center's mission.

Table 8. Referrals for Testing and Other Activity during the Period August 1, 1992 through December 17, 1993

	ESAC	West	ESAC as Percentage of Total
Referrals			
Initial Evaluations	181	1,132	13.79
Reevaluations	86	662	11.50
Consultations	109	233	31.87
Interventions	51	77	39.84
Average per Building	53	41	
Other			
SAT Referrals for Intervention	81	106	43.32

SAT Inservices	15	10	60.00

Although the workload of the center psychologists is less than that of other psychologists in the district when measured only by teacher- or student-ratios, practically speaking, it is unlikely that the workload is any less. The unexplained residual workload is made up of the additional activities necessary to carry out the ESAC's mission.

Expulsion Hearings. The hearing officer for the East Toledo Pupil Personnel Center reported a significant drop in the number of expulsion hearings for special education students during the 1992-93 school year that he believed were due to the intervention conferences held in the schools by the special education supervisor. A review of the expulsion overturn statistics collected by the Pupil Placement office supports the observations of the hearing officer. A comparison of the September 1 - December 1 periods for 1991, 1992, and 1993 revealed that ESAC expulsion hearings for special education students as a percentage of district special education expulsion hearings have declined (Table 9).

Table 9. Special Education Expulsion Hearings, September 1 - December 1, 1991 - 1993.

	ESAC	Other Areas	ESAC as Percentage of District
Sep 1 - Dec 1, 1991	24	67	26%
Sep 1 - Dec 1, 1992	11	53	17%
Sep 1 - Dec 1, 1993	13	88	13%

Union Letters of Complaint. Letters of complaint from the Toledo Federation of Teachers concerning special education issues in the district for Sep 1 - Dec 15 (Fall) periods during years 1991, 1992, and 1993 were examined. There were only two letters of complaint concerning schools served by the ESAC for the Fall 1993 period. Although this is just half of the number of letters of complaint received in the Fall 1992 period (4), only two letters of complaint were filed during Fall 1991 (Table 10).

Table 10. Letters of Complaint Concerning Special Education during Sep 1 - Dec 15, 1991 - 1993.

	Fall 91	Fall 92	Fall 93
ESAC	2	4	2
Other Areas	6	34	9

Conclusions and Recommendations

Quality

The quality of psychological and special education services provided by the ESAC is an improvement over the services that were provided in the area previously. Regular teachers, special education teachers, and administrator groups all perceived improvement in the services. The improvement has occurred across the Availability, Responsiveness, Timeliness, Pleasantness/Professional Behaviors, Utility, and Satisfaction Dimensions.

Improvement and Modification

Special Education Supervision. The special education teachers indicated that services had been improved across all dimensions; however, their scores were significantly lower than the other two groups of respondents. The lower scores may be explained by the difference in supervision services provided by the ESAC. Supervision under the ESAC model does not provide special education teachers with supervisors who have special training or experience in each low-incidence area as the traditional model does. The supervisor in the traditional model may be able to provide greater category-specific expertise and may also adopt an advocacy role on behalf of the concerns of teachers in the category he or she is supervising. These differences and the responses from this group lead to a recommendation for further exploration of this aspect of the center's services.

Dimensions. The five dimensions are of nearly equal importance to the Satisfaction Dimension. However, the Utility Dimension is perceived as the lowest of the six dimensions by the Teachers and Special Education Teachers Groups and as next to the lowest by the Administrators Group. Recommend that center personnel investigate the needs and expectations of the teachers with regard to the Utility Dimension and develop and carry out an action plan to further improve this dimension.

Satisfaction Dimension, East Toledo Junior High. The teachers at East Toledo Junior

High are less satisfied with the ESAC than other ESAC schools. Moreover, the SAT has not been satisfactorily implemented at this school. Recommend that the junior high administrators, building representative, other interested teachers, and ESAC staff form a problem-solving task force to either identify obstacles to the SAT and formulate a plan for successful implementation or identify other avenues for providing a high level of assistance to the junior high teachers.

ESAC Awareness. A strategy designed to increase teacher awareness of the ESAC should be developed. One aspect of the strategy may be broader involvement of teachers with the SATs.

Elementary Counseling Services Provided through the Center. There was nearly consensus support for this proposal from the Administrators Group, with the exception of two counselors. Further study of this proposal should include consideration of the counselors' viewpoint.

Efficiency

The data gathered during this evaluation do not indicate that the service delivery model employed by the center is more or less efficient than the traditional model. Although the workload of the center psychologists is less than that of other psychologists in the district when measured only by teacher- or student-ratios, it is unlikely that the workload is actually less. The unexplained residual workload is made up of additional duties necessary to carrying out the ESAC's mission. Moreover, the outputs of the center differ in type and level from the outputs of the traditional model, making comparison between them very difficult. However, the data indicate that additional psychologists may be needed if the ESAC model is replicated throughout the district with staffing ratios intact.

Replication

Serious consideration should be given to reorganizing the district into regional service areas following the ESAC model. The ESAC has demonstrated the viability of the regional service delivery model by improving the quality of the services it provides during the short period it has been in existence.

Implementation

If the district chooses to adopt the East Center model by establishing regional service centers throughout the district, selection and training of center personnel will be the paramount

factor in the success of the implementation. The most noticeable difference in the ESAC model is the team assignment of the psychologists with the special education supervisor to a regional, non-school campus location. Not as apparent, but of greater importance, is the ESAC staff's collaborative, mutual learning approach to their work.

References

Hayes, Bob E. (1992). *Measuring Customer Satisfaction: Development and Use of Questionnaires*. Milwaukee, WS: ASQC Quality Press.